

AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 15 April 2005 (15.04.2005);
original claims 1-23 replaced by amended claims 1-23]

1. A method for separating mono-branched hydrocarbons from a mixture of hydrocarbons comprising:
 - bringing said mixture into contact with one adsorbent having a selectivity order from mono-branched to linear further to multi-branched hydrocarbons,
 - preferentially and selectively adsorbing said mono-branched hydrocarbons by said adsorbent, and
 - desorbing said mono-branched hydrocarbons from said adsorbent, thereby allowing to selectively separate said mono-branched hydrocarbons.
2. Method according to claim 1 comprising the step of bringing said mixture into contact with only one adsorbent.
3. Method for separating mixtures of hydrocarbons into fractions of linear, mono-branched and multi-branched hydrocarbons comprises the steps of:
 - a. bringing said mixture into contact with only one adsorbent, said adsorbent having a selectivity order from mono-branched to linear further to multi-branched hydrocarbons,
 - b. separating a stream enriched in multi-branched hydrocarbons from said adsorbent, thereby allowing to separate said multi-branched hydrocarbons,
 - c. desorbing the linear hydrocarbons from said adsorbent, thereby allowing to separate said linear hydrocarbons, and
 - d. desorbing said mono-branched hydrocarbons from said adsorbent, thereby allowing to separate said mono-branched hydrocarbons.
4. Method according to any of claims 1 to 3, wherein said hydrocarbons are alkanes.
5. Method according to any of claims 1 to 4, whereby said adsorbent is a zeolitic adsorbent.

6. Method according to any of claims 1 to 5, whereby said adsorbent is a zeolitic adsorbent having cavities of which the dimensions are larger than the pore openings giving access to these cavities, these cavities having a smallest diameter of at least 4.5 Angström and a largest diameter of at least 10 Angström.
7. Method according to claim 6, whereby said cavities have a smallest diameter between 4.5 and 15 Angström, and a largest diameter between 10 and 25 Angström.
8. Method according to any of claims 1-7, whereby said zeolitic adsorbent comprises the molar relationship
$$X_2O_3: (n) YO_2$$
wherein n is at least 2, X is a trivalent element and Y is a tetravalent element.
9. Method according to claim 8, whereby n is at least 2, wherein X is selected from the group comprising aluminium, iron, gallium and boron and wherein Y is silicon.
10. Method according to claim 8 or 9, whereby n is at least 10, wherein X is aluminium, and wherein Y is silicon.
11. Method according to any of claims 1-10, whereby said zeolitic adsorbent is MCM-22.
12. Method according to any of claims 1-11, wherein said zeolitic adsorbent has a pore occupancy comprised between 0.01 and 100%.
13. Method according to any of claims 1-12, whereby said mixture of alkanes is a mixture of linear, mono-branched and multi-branched alkanes.
14. Method according to claim 13, wherein said mixture comprises 0.1-99.9% linear, 0.1-99.9% mono-branched and 0.1-90% multi-branched alkanes.

15. Method according to any of claims 13-14, whereby said mixture of alkanes is a mixture of linear and mono-branched alkanes in a ratio comprised between 1:100 to 100:1.
16. Method according to claim 15, wherein said mixture comprises mono-branched and linear alkanes in a ratio of 1:1.
17. Method according to any of claims 1-16, wherein said separation is based on entropic effects.
18. Use of only one adsorbent for separating mono-branched hydrocarbons from a mixture of hydrocarbons.
19. Use of one adsorbent according to claim 18 for preferentially adsorbing mono-branched hydrocarbons from said mixture.
20. Use according to claim 18 or 19, wherein said adsorbent is an adsorbent as defined in any of claims 5-12.
21. Use according to any of claims 18-20, wherein said mixture is a mixture as defined in any of claims 13-16.
22. Use according to any of claims 18-21, wherein said separation is based on entropic effects.
23. Use of MCM-22 as a zeolite having a catalytic and an adsorbent activity for separating mixtures of non-aromatic hydrocarbons into fractions of linear, mono-branched and multi-branched hydrocarbons.